

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 21951 111756Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4622
INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAKAR IMMEDIATE
DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
EUCOM VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE
USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T PARIS 21951

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, MR
SUBJ: MAURITANIAN SITUATION

REF: PARIS 21702

1. WE DISCUSSED THE SITUATION IN MAURITANIA AFTER
THE COUP WITH QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR
WEST AFRICA (DE LA ROCHERE) LATE AFTERNOON JULY 11.
HE SAID THAT THE COUP HAD COME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE
TO THE GOF AND, HE WAS SURE, TO ALGERIAN AND MOROCCAN
GOVERNMENTS AS WELL, THOUGH THE GOF HAD BEEN AWARE FOR
SOME MONTHS OF THE GROWING ISOLATION OF MOKTAR OULD
DADDAH.

2. DE LA ROCHERE SAID THAT VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE NEW
LEADERS ARE KNOWN TO THE GOF. IN LARGE PART, THEY
ARE PEOPLE WHO HAD POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY BEFORE
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MOKTAR ABRUPTLY SHIFTED MAURITANIAN POLICY IN THE
1972-73 PERIOD TOWARDS THE LEFT AND ALGERIA. THEY
ARE ESSENTIALLY PRO-WESTERN AND TRADITIONALLY CONSERV-
ATIVE. THEY ARE NEITHER STRONGLY ANTI-ALGERIAN NOR
PRO-MOROCCAN. FRANCE ANTICIPATES NO DIFFICULTY IN
ESTABLISHING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE NEW LEADERSHIP.

3. DE LA ROCHERE SAID THAT THE PROXIMATE CAUSE OF THE COUP WAS THE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS WAR AND THE MANNER IN WHICH MOKTAR WAS CONDUCTING IT. HE THOUGHT THE NEW LEADERSHIP WOULD NOT LET MAURITANIA'S CLAIM TO A PORTION OF THE EX-SPANISH SAHARA INTERFERE WITH A SOLUTION TO THE WAR. THE NEW LEADERSHIP HAS ALREADY SHOWN ITSELF VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED NOT TO OFFEND MOROCCO AND DE LA ROCHERE THEREFORE FORESEES NO IMMEDIATE INITIATIVES TOWARDS THE POLISARIO. HE PERSONALLY BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT THE COUP IN MAURITANIA COULD INCREASE THE PRESSURES TOWARDS FINDING SOME KIND OF SOLUTION TO THE SAHARAN WAR--EVEN THOUGH ITS OUTLINES ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE NOW.
HARTMAN

SECRET

NNN

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